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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses three concerns in which both churches and schools have a continuing interest. The first pertains to the nature of professional status and the struggle of both the ministry and of education to gain it. Problems involved in assuming the same are delineated. The second concern deals with economic issues that create difficulties for churches and schools in carrying out their specific purposes. The third involves the two philosophical concerns of change and effectiveness in teaching and their implications for both schools and churches. A conclusion follows which stresses the existence of these concerns and the challenge to confront them. (Author)

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"Church and School: Continuing Similar Concerns"

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Torch Club Objectives: To unite in good fellowship and understanding, men engaged in the practice of the recognized professions; to afford them a means of expressing themselves on civic, social, and scientific matters; to give them a larger view of each other's professional problems; and to make possible an interchange of knowledge and understanding gained from their own experience.

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Introduction

Our celebration of the Bicentennial year makes this presentation feasible as we focus upon our cultural heritage. Keep in mind the religious impact which the early settlers applied to education and schools. The colonists carried Bibles in the vernacular with them and considered initial schooling for purposes of enabling the citizenry to read the Word. Also remember that in terms of school structure, a legal precedent had been established in England through the Poor Law of 1601 whereby public taxation was enacted to take care of the poor and provide for the compulsory apprenticeship of poor boys and girls. This set the stage for religious, moral, and vocational training and influenced the colonists' education policies as well as those of England. Massachusetts passed a series of laws from 1634 to 1647 based upon this precedent which resulted in compulsory education and the establishment of schools.

I am not speaking to you on the subject of "church/state relations" or the issue of "separation of church and state." I will address you on what I refer to as "Continuing Similar Concerns": Most of us have had or are having relationships with churches and, at the same time, we pay taxes in support of public education. In addition, many of us teach at the higher education level. The attempt to address you extemporaneously (with the exception of quotations) runs a risk of oversimplifying the concerns and forgetfulness, but I assume you prefer this route.

The Professional Concern

My comments on this concern are predicated upon an underlying assumption that both education and the ministry (teachers and clergy) are seeking professional status; that is, to be regarded as "professions" (professionals) much the same as law, medicine, architecture, dentistry, etc. Greenwood has defined a profession as follows:

> The professional participant brings to the organization specialized knowledge of skill typically acquired through years of formal training and apprenticeship. He insists on relative freedom from organizational constraints in practicing his specialty; has a strong commitment to the development of his career, which will be within his particular area of expertise but not necessarily within a particular organization; and the professional is careful to exercise his specialty with responsibility, so that standards of performance are set, at least partially, by the professional rather than by the organization for which he works.[1]

The Handbook of Applied Psychology adds the dimension of a fixed remuneration or fee schedule and others suggest that there are symbols, values, and norms includ- an appropriate manner of behavior. This latter consideration raises questions pertaining to the meanings of professional and unprofessional conduct such as deciding what constitutes the professional or unprofessional act.

The clergyman's interest in professional status has been exemplified historically in that theology was a respectable endeavor in the medieval universities on a par with, if not, at times superior to medicine and law. Currently, Seminaries are offering the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity degrees, distinct from Doctor of Theology and Master of Theology degrees, but replacing the traditional Bachelor Divinity and Sacred Theology Bachelor degrees. Clergymen, again, often regard their practice as being similar to that of medicine and law where the parish people are conveniently considered to be patients and clients.

There are reasons, however, why the Protestant clergy do not represent a profession. They are not in exclusive control of a basic cody of skills based upon a body of abstract knowledge to benefit clients; they do not possess a monopoly over the practice of the occupation; a large percentage have been found to be ill-educated; they are not banded together into an influential association for the advancement of professional goals; their role is often particularistic with respect to a denomination and is functionally diffuse.[2]

In comparison, the educator's interest in professional status can be noted by observing, for example, the Education Index which, during the last ten years, has numerous articles classified on the subject of teaching as a profession. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is currently dealing

with the theme "Educating a Profession" and making a serious effort to settle the issue once and for all. The continuing dispute over education as a discipline handled theoretically in cultural foundations departments and practically in liberal arts circles bears a direct relationship to the problem.

Complicating the problem of professional status for educators is the militancy of teacher organizations. The enigma can be illustrated perhaps in the words of Helen D. Wise, past NEA President:

> I am a teacher advocate: For 18 years as a junior high teacher, I devoted my energy, time, and efforts toward the improvement of education and the teaching profession...hours at the bargaining table for my local association; led demonstrations...strike rallies... picket lines...In short, I am a militant.
>
> During this same period, I was involved in hundreds of workshops and in-service programs...I completed my doctorate, developed an innovative program...wrote a course of study...I sponsored student council activities, chaperoned school picnics and dances, and spent many hours counseling youngsters...In other words, I am a professional teacher.[3]

I would suggest to you that student council activities and chaperoning are institutional requirements unrelated to professional requisites. Even more crucial is the implied conflict between the desire for professional status and union-type activities. The educational associations are becoming more union-oriented and active (NEA, AFT, State Units, etc.) for better or worse. No judgment is intended here, just an acknowledgment of the trend.

Kemerer and Baldridge have also noted:

> Clearly unions may help to raise personnel standards, especially in institutions where professional practices, peer judgments, and faculty rights have not gained a foothold. A number of negative consequences, however, may offset these positive effects. In struggling for their members' job security, unions may harm the traditional process of peer evaluations based on subjective criteria. Their thrust toward overly specific, objective criteria may tend to encourage "Promotion and tenure by default" rather than by merit, and this in turn, may reduce the quality of the profession. The price paid for job security may be a system hamstrung by burgeoning bureacracy, rigid rules and procedures, and constant grievance actions.[4]

Furthermore, how much control does an association wield (NEA for example) when the higher education unit prepares, the State certifies, and the public controls

the purse strings? Even a prestigious university with endowed blessings must be scrutinized by a state department of education when it comes to preparing teachers for the public schools.

This subject of financial benefits is probably a timely lead-in to our next concern.

The Economic Concern

The economic base for both church and school is public support and the engendered revenues are utilized primarily for salaries. A former church of my acquaintance recently sent me a copy of its budget which indicates that out of $18,500, almost $13,000 of that is for pastoral support. The Church is dependent upon voluntary contributions. The pledge for an every member canvass is subject to change on the part of the contributor and monthly statements sent to each are for information purposes and normally never to be regarded as dunning notices.

A related issue pertains to effective clergymen serving larger churches. Many times this is predominantly influenced by the financial condition of the particular church. A number of these clergy would accept smaller, rural pastorates if the same amount of funds were available as in the larger parishes.

The schools are probably slightly better off; they establish their economic base through the tax system. It is true that IRS permits deductions in different categories to both churches and schools, contributions and taxes, but, undoubtedly, the latter is a bit more promising. The political process, so long considered undesirable in education, in spite of Jefferson, is a vital part - the public elects Board members and votes on budgets in most areas of the country. If lean years are in the making, taxpayers are not generally going to approve additional funds for schools if this results in tax increases. Obviously, there are exceptions, but mostly where functional bonds exist among teachers, administrators, and the public. Van Til points out:

> The early 1970's was a period of economic recession, a time characterized both by rising unemployment and growing inflation. Consequently, com-

> munities reduced school budgets as far as possible; funding of education was often defeated by the voters at the polls. In recession years, Americans tighten their economic belts. Though business and industry again prospered in 1973, a sharp increase in inflation penalized people on fixed incomes and offset wage gains of many workers.[5]

Regier adds:

> There really is not an oversupply of teachers; there is simply an undersupply of money. For a country that spends about 7 percent of the gross national product at education, one can conclude that spending enough for education may be the real problem...Given enough dollars, the conclusion may be that "Too many teachers" is fiction; but until the dollar problem is solved, it is a fact.[6]

Interestingly enough, in view of our similar concern for both church and school, parochial aid is relevant. Some argue that if it remains unaccomplished, parochial schools will collapse and overload already overburdened schools.

Foundations and the Federal Government have bearing upon the problem. Too often particular philosophies are brought to bear upon a school system because it needs the money. The same occurs with churches when wealthier benefactors impose themselves upon the administration and practices of a local church. As far as education is concerned, Cremin reminds us:

> What I am really saying is that given a continuing localism, we have evolved what is in many respects a national system of education; and the fundamental political problem is not whether we shall have a measure of Federal control in education but how this control will be exercised and kept sufficiently responsive to the public. I am urging that we frankly acknowledge that national policies in education are being worked out and that we devise ways of debating the leading issues and of opening the debate to public scrutiny.[7]

The implication of philosophy is evident in the above, and I now ask you to reflect upon this third concern.

The Philosophical Concern

I will raise two issues that are philosophically-oriented and of continuing concern to Church and school. The first is that of "change" and its impact upon both.

In the Twenty-third Street Lecture at Syracuse University, Burns claimed: "If freedom implies choice among existing alternatives and action upon our choices, then freedom must also imply change and the power to effect change."[8] Ironically,

conservatives and liberals in education agree that, as presently constituted, education needs to be changed. The conservatives suggest that we ought to retreat to the pre-Deweyan era; the liberals stress that we must move beyond Dewey. I suspect that Burns would find the Church in a similar dilemma with conservative and liberal elements arguing over "back to the fundamentals" vs. "situational ethics." Regardless of position, it appears that both are saying that some kind of change is desired.

The Church with its emphasis upon faith in God and Lordship connotations is caught up in the enigma. Burns considers this when he asks, "How free are we if we earn it by surrendering it? The Church often equates freedom with conformity."[9] (An enlightening observation can currently be made with respect to students' credentials and recommendations - some institutions of higher education are seeking waivers of students' rights to see!) Theologically, we're dealing with the problem of integrating change (relativity) and God's purposes (that which is Absolute). An illustration of change in theological debate can be seen in Moses and his dealing with God's anger directed towards Israel. In this experience it is apparent that God changes his mind about destroying the Israelites, yet His eternal purpose continues to unfold (remains unchanged).

Although the dichotomy between traditionalism and progressivism in education has become somewhat dated, arguments over open schools versus self-contained classrooms, all-year versus ten-months schools, non-graded versus graded schools persist. Change continues to be a factor in educational procedures, proposals, and problems.

Over a decade ago Wheelis declared:

> Clearly character cannot remain fixed while the conditions of life change. And clearly the conditions of life have always been changing. Man's activities are shaped by two superimposed modes of action which are distinctively human. These are the use of tools and the creation of myths. They are the instrumental process and the institutional process.
>
> The instrumental process designates those activities dominated by an attitude which, if put in words, would be somewhat as follows: "Let us first examine the facts, and draw only such conclusions as the facts warrant. If no conclusion is warranted but some conclusion is necessary - since life does not wait on certainty - then let us hold the conclusion tentative and revise it as new evidence is gathered." Scientific method, therefore, approximates the essence of the matter; but the instrumental

> process is rational, deriving from its demonstrable usefulness to the life process. The final appeal is to the evidence.
>
> The institutional process designates all those activities which are dominated by the quest for certainty. Everything mundane is subject to change, and hence certainty is not to be found in the affairs of men. Solomon put it succinctly: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Religion conveys the essence, but the institutional process is arbitrary; the final appeal is to force.
>
> As change is the essence of the instrumental process, so standing pat is the essence of the institutional process. Institutions change only under duress, only under the impact, direct or remote, of the instrumental process. Revolutionary changes are implicit in the discovery of fire, agriculture, the wheel, and printing from movable type; but no impetus to change is to be found in the institutions of private property, the church, the divine right of kinds, or human sacrifice to gods. The instrumental impetus to change and the institutional insistence on rooted permanence constitute the dialectic of civilization.[10]

Church and school continue to be confronted with the question, "How do we accept the reality of change and how are we to manage it?"

The second philosophically-oriented concern pertains to effectiveness in teaching. Church and school both have vested interests here. Fortunately, we are moving away from ethical connotations ("bad" and "good" teachers) and concentrating more upon teacher effectiveness. A prominent aspect of this has been to analyze learning, what it is, what contributes to it, how it is manifested. The continuing emphasis upon classroom climate and its measurement has affected both Church and public schools, with interaction analysis instrumentation being applied. The meaning of authority and power, and understanding of authoritarian and democratic approaches all bear upon the issue of effectivess.

An outgrowth of ascertaining this can be located in the contemporary focus upon competency-based developments. In education, state legislatures and departments of education are mandating competency-based programs; however, education is not being uniquely treated. In the November 23rd Sunday N. Y. Times Magazine an article was entitled with the question, "What Makes A Good Lawyer?" and the answer was delineated in terms of competencies essential. Teacher education programs are currently being designed with a competency base, both out of choice and under mandate. Seminaries, likewise, have concentrated efforts on the preparation of

ministers with a variety of competencies necessary to their task.

There is no doubt that change and effectiveness are properly related to philosophical underpinnings. Church and school are finding themselves face to face with current challenges that must be satisfied.

Conclusion

I appreciate the time you've given to me and I'm most willing to entertain questions. These concerns presented are by no means exclusive of others. There may be nothing new for you here, but the issues are nonetheless before us and, at the moment, have not been resolved.

Notes

[1]William T. Greenwood, Decision-Theory and Information Systems (Southwestern Pub. Co.: Cincinnati, 1969), p. 655.

[2]Taken from notes on a presentation by Howard M. Ham quoting Hagestrom, Syracuse, N. C., 1966.

[3]Helen D. Wise, "Is Teacher Advocacy Compatible with Professionalism?" Today's Education, LXII (Sept./Oct., 1973), p. 4.

[4]Frank R. Kemeridge and J. Victor Baldridge, "The Impact of Faculty Unions on Governance," Change, VII (Dec./Jan., 1975-76), p. 50.

[5]William Van Til, Education: A Beginning (Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston, 1974), p. 16.

[6]Herold O. Regier, Too Many Teachers: Fact or Fiction? (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1972), p. 37.

[7]Lawrence A. Cremin, The Genius of American Education (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 99.

[8]Hobert W. Burns, Philosophy, Politics, and Public Education (Syracuse: School of Education, Syracuse University, 1963), p. 11.

[9]Ibid, p. 10.

[10]Allen Wheelis, The Quest for Identify (W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.: New York, 1958), p. 71-81.